

FEB
2020

NEWSLETTER OF THE
CITY OF TACOMA

HealthVine



‘Maintain, Don’t Gain’ Challenge Winners

Weekly Fitbit 3 Charge Winners: Joseph Sholl, Hien Ho, Melanie Storts, Michelle Wentz, Alexis Pappas

There was a 16-way tie for the team with the highest average points: This is truly amazing and the highest tie we’ve had yet! The winning team randomly chosen by RedBrick was **MAC Fleet on Fire!** (Chynna Holtman, Mariah Gallagher, Adriana Valenzuela).

There was a three-way tie for the team with the highest cumulative points: The winning team randomly chosen by RedBrick was **Warehouse** (Jonathon Fields, Troy Langfod, Lauri Mattsen, Bret Larson, Rudy Antonowicz, Rachel Fields).

2021 Wellness Program is Underway

Our 2021 Incentive Period runs from Oct. 1, 2019 through Sept. 30, 2020. Like last year, [there are several ways for you to earn your 1,000 points!](#)

There is one major change this year. You **MUST** complete your Compass Health Assessment (400 points) to earn the total 1,000 points (your Rewards Wheel will turn **GREEN** once you reach your 1,000 point goal). Otherwise, the points earned through any other activity will only show as “pending” in **ORANGE**.



Picture courtesy of the American Heart Association. Learn more about Heart Month on Page 2.

Eight Steps to Breaking a Bad Habit

You have to finish an important project in two hours, so you instinctively head to the vending machine for a high calorie treat. You’re stuck in traffic with an important meeting coming up, and you start biting your nails. You know you should go to bed and get some sleep, but you can’t seem to pull yourself away from the television. If any of this sounds familiar, you may be among the many Americans hindered with a stress-producing bad habit. A habit is a recurrent, often unconscious pattern of behavior. All people have habits, says Jim McGee, Ph.D., a psychologist who is an expert on habitual behavior. “If we didn’t have the natural tendency toward habit, our behavior would be chaotic and random,” he says. But even though habit formation is natural, bad habits can be self-destructive. Good habits, on the other hand, such as exercising or talking with a friend can relieve stress in your life. Bad habits can set the stage for everything from bad relationships to health problems. So why do we have bad habits? They’re unhealthy coping mechanisms that often have an immediate payoff, says Dr. McGee.

If a habit begins to interfere with your enjoyment of life, it’s an indication that something must be changed. He also warns that using substances like nicotine or alcohol may result in a health-threatening addiction. In that case, professional help may be warranted. If you’re just dealing with an annoying habit, however, your impetus to change may be simple frustration: One day you wake up and are sick and tired of doing things the way you’ve been doing them. At that point, you’re ready to move forward. If you’re tired of your chewed nails or the headaches that come from too much coffee, you may be ready to adopt a step-by-step action plan that includes the following steps.

Step 1: Define and understand the habit. Before you can change, you must identify the reason for the habit. Bad habits, from lateness to laziness, often serve a hidden purpose we don’t recognize, such as avoiding hurt or disappointment or establishing control, experts say.

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Step 2: Set short and long-term goals. Do you want to lose 20 pounds? Dr. McGee says you need to decide exactly what your ultimate goal is, and then break it down into small increments you can actually accomplish.

Step 3: Define and eliminate your triggers. Do business calls make you reach for a cigarette? Experts say that when quitting a bad habit, you need to set up stations in which the habit would be prohibited. Examples: Make calls from a smokeless environment; clear your pantry of junk food.

Step 4: Get support. Support can come in the form of an established group, such as Weight Watchers, or from an understanding friend or partner. Change is more fun and successful if you have support and encouragement along the way.

Step 5: Replace a bad habit with a good one. A good habit, like exercising or using relaxation techniques, can help you manage stress in a healthy way. If you want to cut back on a nighttime television habit, for instance, you might consider reading a good book instead.

Step 6: Give yourself rewards. A weekend away? You'll certainly deserve one if you keep to your goals. But don't overdo it; Rewarding yourself with six chocolate bars for losing weight is counterproductive. Instead, reward yourself with new clothes.

Step 7: Accept plateaus. According to Dr. McGee, behavioral change follows a predictable curve, rising quickly at first, reaching a plateau, and then rising more slowly with still more plateaus. You will be more prepared to stick with your goal as long as you know to expect these plateaus.

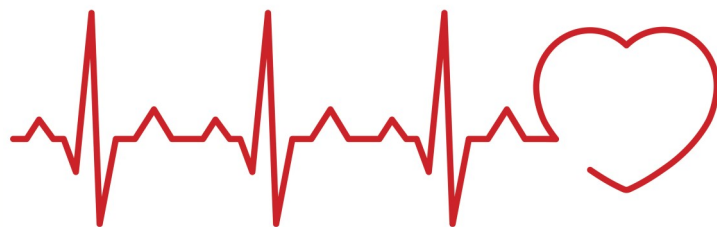
Step 8: Be kind to yourself. Having a bad habit doesn't make you a bad person. The more you tell yourself you are bad, the more likely you'll indulge in your bad habit to relieve your stress.

Source: Adapted from First Choice Health EAP Jan. 2020 newsletter

February is Heart Month

Heart disease is the #1 cause of death in the United States. In fact, more than 1,000 people experience sudden cardiac arrests each day and only 10 percent of those individuals will survive if the incident occurs outside of a hospital. The use of CPR and a defibrillator can raise the survival rate to 30 percent. Visit the training calendar to view the CPR training schedule.

We are all aware of the risk factors for heart disease, which include high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, smoking, obesity, diabetes, physical inactivity and unhealthy eating habits. So, adopting a healthy lifestyle is key when it comes to preventing, managing or even treating heart disease.



Heart Healthy Journey Recommendations

Journeys are a behavioral change option in RedBrick where you can earn 10 points per stage AND 200 points for the entire Journey. [Visit our FAQs page](#) to help make Journeys a simple, fun and effective experience for you.

Blood Pressure and Diabetes

DASH Your Way Healthier (4 stages). The DASH (dietary approaches to stop hypertension) eating plan can dramatically affect your blood pressure — but it can be challenging to dash into the plan. Start with one small step, and then another and another. Before you know it, you'll be eating the DASH way!

Cholesterol

Good Fat, Bad Fat (3 stages). Knowing which fats and how much of them to eat can help you avoid heart disease and lose weight. Discover new, tasty, healthy-fat foods, learn how much is enough and practice easy tricks for recognizing and replacing bad fats in your diet.

Nutrition

Fuel Up: Eat For Energy (3 stages). This Journey will help you build the skills to eat for energy all day. You'll learn how to power up at breakfast and pick some smart snacks to keep you fueled up between meals. Before you know it, you'll be eating for energy every day of the week.

Physical Activity

Use What You Have (2 stages). You don't need special equipment or a pricey gym membership to get in shape. Learn how to use everyday items around your home—and office—for a full workout. The payoff: more money in your pocket, less clutter in your home, and a stronger, fitter body to boot!

Tobacco

Make Your Date to Quit (2 stages). You can quit! Just take it one small step at a time. In this Journey, you'll set a date. Then you'll start practicing what it's like to be smoke-free by starting to say goodbye to those triggers. It's all about being ready when your quit date comes.

Weight Loss

Move it and Lose it (2 stages). Work your way up to 30 minutes of healthy activity a day by simply moving a little more every hour. You don't even have to get out of your seat to get the benefits. Choose steps and start moving.

Financial Wellness: Pre-Retirement Seminars

It is never too early to start planning for retirement! City of Tacoma employees, their family members and friends are invited to attend any of our retirement planning seminars. All sessions will be held in the Tacoma Public Utilities Auditorium.

City of Tacoma Resources Seminar

When: April 16 from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Retirement Director Tim Allen will give an overview of retirement system benefits. He will demonstrate the online retirement benefits calculator tool, explore various options and show you how to better estimate your future benefit.

Human Resources Specialist Diane Peterson will provide an overview of the 457 deferred compensation and HRA VEBA plans. Employees can save and invest in their futures with tax advantages when participating in deferred compensation. The HRA VEBA is a post-separation account-based health plan. The overview will cover general rules and benefit options for eligible employees. Diane will also discuss post-retirement health care options and eligibility requirements.

10 Key Retirement Questions/ Healthcare Costs in Retirement

When: April 23 from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Jim Reinke from ICMA-RC will explain how transitioning into and through retirement can be rewarding and challenging. He will also help you understand the potential healthcare costs in retirement and how to take meaningful steps to be prepared.

Medicare 101

When: April 30 from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Jenny Stark from Regence will help you gain the knowledge needed to make informed decisions and pick a plan that works best for you when the time comes. You'll learn about:

- Basics of Social Security
- When you should enroll into original Parts A and B
- How to avoid Parts B and D penalties
- The difference between Medicare Advantage and Medicare Supplement plans
- What is the Part D prescription coverage gap (otherwise known as the "donut hole")
- What you should know if you're still working and participating in an employer-sponsored plan when you turn 65
- What you need to know if you're currently participating in a Health Savings Account (HSA) and are, or soon will be, eligible for Medicare

Social Security 101

When: May 7 from 4 to 5:30 p.m.

Kirk Larson is a Washington public affairs representative for the Social Security Administration. He will answer all of your Social Security questions, including (but not limited to):

- When you are eligible to receive retirement benefits
- How early retirement affects your benefits
- How to get the most from your benefit
- What the future of Social Security looks like

We recommend that you familiarize yourself with the "my Social Security" online services prior to this presentation. To do so, go to ssa.gov/myaccount to create an account and print out your Social Security statement **before** attending this seminar. You'll then bring that statement **to** the seminar.

LEOFF II Resources Seminar (Fire, Police, PPSMA)

When: May 21 from 4 to 6 p.m.

Catherine Cadoo from the Washington State Department of Retirement Systems will cover your LEOFF pension plan and benefit options.

HR Specialist Diane Peterson will provide an overview of the post-retirement medical and COBRA options and eligibility requirements. Diane will **also** cover the 457 deferred compensation plans*.

**Representatives from ICMA and Nationwide will be available with marketing materials and to answer more in-depth questions.*

VEBA Consultant Brian Riehs from Gallagher will cover the general rules and benefit options of the post-separation account-based health plan for eligible employees.

Becky Wallen from DiMartino Associates will cover the Medical Expense Reimbursement Plan (MERP).

Upcoming Wellness Trainings

Brain Disorders (Webinar): Learn about common brain disorders like dementia, Alzheimer's and how food can play a role in treatment. **Feb. 11 from 10:30 to 11 a.m.**

[Register today.](#)

Tax Planning Strategies (ICMA-RC): Description and registration link will be sent via a Wellness email once the information is available. **Feb. 25 at 9 a.m. and noon**

Stay Active at Work: Get motivated to increase your exercise by learning stretches you can do at your desk to stay strong! **March 24 from Noon to 12:30 p.m.** [Register today.](#)

Beneficiary Designations/RMD's (ICMA-RC): Description and registration link will be sent via a Wellness email once the information is available. **March 31 at 9 a.m. and noon**